

MUSEUM NEWS

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

NUMBER 93

TOLEDO, OHIO

MARCH, 1941



ST. JEROME IN THE WILDERNESS

GIFT OF EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

GENTILE BELLINI



M U S E U M N E W S
THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART
FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

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EDITORIAL

MR. AND MRS. LIBBEY would be greatly pleased with the results of the first season of our second concert series.

It was their hope, frequently discussed while they were living, and expressed in more formal terminology in their wills, that the Museum would offer the best of concerts at the most reasonable of prices, if not even free of charge.

Mr. Libbey's bequests provided for the erection of the Peristyle, its maintenance and the overhead expenses in connection with our main concert series. We have each year recovered from ticket sales most of the cost of talent.

Mrs. Libbey's generosity will eventually make it possible for us to expand considerably the number of concerts which we are able to offer at a price which we believe the lowest ever known for comparable quality.

Since the opening of the Peristyle we have looked forward to the time when popular demand as well as anticipated income would make possible the realization of the hopes of our donors.

The complete sale of our main series tickets very early last spring indicated that the first step in expansion might justifiably be then taken.

The sale of seats surpassed our hopes and expectations. The enthusiasm of the audiences, the many expressions of gratitude for the generous thought of the Libbeys have been most rewarding.

A NOTABLE WORK OF GENTILE BELLINI

THE St. Jerome in the Wilderness by Gentile Bellini was one of the great attractions of the exhibition of Four Centuries of Venetian Painting held in the Museum last spring. It combines a number of outstanding qualities. It is in an exceptionally good state of preservation, which allows one to enjoy undisturbed its light and spirited coloring—almost comparable to the charm of a water color. It has a pleasant way of presenting the story whose great outlines are clearly drawn and whose details are rendered with a very visible enjoyment of realistic minuteness. It holds an important position within the evolution of painting in Venice so that it might become a decisive key for the understanding of a rather dark period.

The panel is a full-page illustration of the legend of St. Jerome which was so favored in the period and place of its origin that the representations of the subject are practically numberless in Venice in the second half of the fifteenth century. Here the story is told with a very personal mixture of freedom and exactitude. The predominant motive, the retirement of the great Scholar-Saint to the desert to devote himself to silence and meditation, is duly emphasized and, in second place, a number of episodes are added to illustrate the busy life of the brethren whom St. Jerome had assembled around him. Incidents are shown without insistence upon being complete and exhaustive, but are intended to produce the general mood of a well-animated solitude. In the upper left corner the story of the lion's first appearance in the convent is told, the other monks fleeing while St. Jerome kindly approaches the wounded animal; in the middle ground we see monks and lay-brothers occupied with wood-chopping and loading their donkey which in the distance is driven home. In the upper right a few indistinct figures are visible in a dark cave suggesting the last moments of the pious Saint as told by his legend. Animals approach confidently in the foreground; the smart little lion and the many tiny animals—squirrels, ducks, rabbits, a scorpion, lizards, guinea hens, and a peacock—testify to Jerome's love of his fellow creatures. At the same time they cooperate in linear interest, by their minuteness and liveliness, with the reeds and weeds in the foreground, with the dense foliage and dead stumps in the middle, and the diminutive subtropical trees behind, to give the impression of peaceful loveliness.

The combination of nearness and remoteness is most happily and freely reached by means of the composition. The right half of the panel is marked by the steep mountain which fills it behind the Saint, the other opens into infinite distance. The dark cave sets

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off St. Jerome's figure, isolating it from the two other hermits who are separated from him by this arrangement and by their shy gestures. He is left alone to his prayer and his meditation, the expression of his face proclaiming his positive desire of silence. Only the faithful lion, cat-like, playing next to him, shares his loneliness.

In the left half of the painting the onlooker is lured into the distance by the formation of the soil, by the paths that lead that way, by the figures, groups of trees, and hills that draw him irresistibly into infinite depth. The shallowness and seclusion of the setting on the right—the representational and devotional part of the picture—is in contrast to the lucidity and unrestraint of the other half, which might be called its illustrative and worldly counterpart.

This is the principle of composition prevailing in Jacopo Bellini's so-called sketchbooks in Paris and London that more correctly ought to be qualified as collections of exemplary compositions. Among the many typical examples, the praying St. Francis in Paris¹ is remarkably similar. But there are others, St. Christopher in a landscape,² or St. George,³ which are hardly less related. The type of the arrangement goes back to Mantegna in whose artistic evolution its gradual growth might be studied. The Adoration of the Magi in Florence, the centerpiece of the triptych painted in 1463-64,

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forms the immediate model for the St. Jerome; even the division into a close right half—with a curtain formed by a rocky hill and a dark cave framing and isolating the sacred scene—and a left part in which crooked paths lead leisurely into depth is encountered here. The conformity is even so great that we might be tempted to place the St. Jerome still closer to Mantegna unless other versions of the same subject in his immediate circle did not warn us. The St. Jerome, formerly belonging to the Mogmar Art Foundation, now to the National Gallery in Washington,⁴ illustrates how, if not Mantegna himself, at least a direct follower of his, was bound to another artistic tendency; not only the kneeling saint in the middle is much more plastic in his formation, but every detail—the rocks, the trees—betrays the same outspoken trend to plasticity. The Toledo St. Jerome displays a completely different attitude. It is

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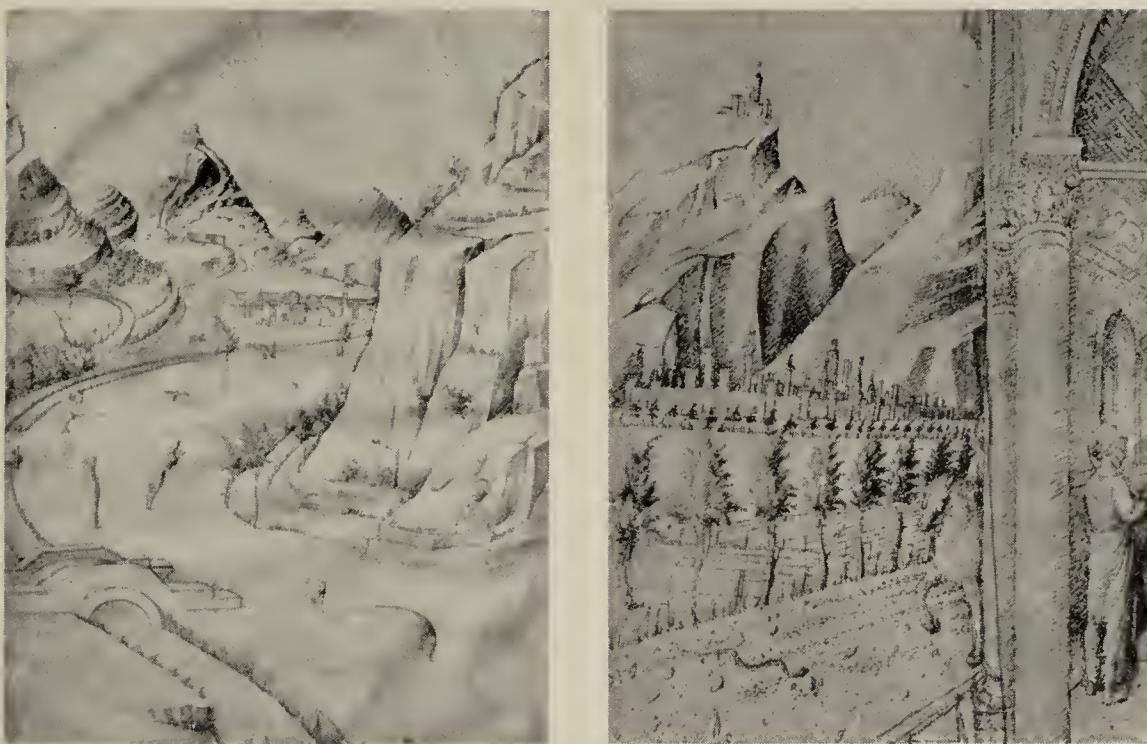
DETAIL OF ST. JEROME IN THE WILDERNESS

painted by a follower of Andrea Mantegna, but by one who maintained his independence rooted in a different artistic origin and training.

It is universally known that Jacopo Bellini is such an independent follower of Mantegna. Again the sketchbooks offer us abundant material to prove that each detail in the Toledo painting is compatible with Jacopo's stock of types and forms. By dozens we find here these crystalline rocks,⁵ which however are softer than Mantegna's, the dainty little trees,⁶ and the ambitiously constructed architecture of the convent in the background.⁷ Here we find the elongated boneless saints, so different from Mantegna's, which may be traced back to the Byzantine tradition of Venetian painting,⁸ the much freer and more realistic figures of the woodchoppers and peasants,⁹ even the well-observed and naturally moving lions.¹⁰ The head of St. Jerome is a variation of God the Father's.¹¹ There is no doubt that the St. Jerome rests on artistic material resembling that assembled in the drawings.

But can the execution of the painting be attributed to Jacopo Bellini? The St. Jerome in the Gallery of Verona¹² seems to be an argument against such a theory. It is true this attribution has been contradicted, but without sufficient reasons, as Van Marle states. At any rate the painting in Verona marks the stage reached by Jacopo Bellini and this stage is certainly much more archaic

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DRAWINGS FROM SKETCHBOOK OF JACOPO BELLINI

than the painting in Toledo. Another consideration confirms the doubts of Jacopo's authorship. The composition ought to be posterior to Mantegna's of 1463-1464. At that time Jacopo was an old man approaching the end of his career; he died in 1470-1471. We do not know how far toward his end he was able to continue his artistic development; but we may doubt that as a master in his late sixties he could produce something so overwhelmingly fresh and direct. In spite of the conformity with the material offered by the sketchbooks, there is no trace of a use of patterns or of conventional forms as one would expect of an old man. The painter of this delightful picture must have been a young man, not a beginner, but an artist in his bloom; moreover an artist who must have been familiar with Jacopo Bellini's drawings, yet did not imitate them but looked at them from the aloofness of the next generation.

This description fits both of Jacopo's sons, Gentile and Giovanni. They were born in 1429 and 1430 respectively and were in their thirties at the time this picture should have been produced. They inherited their father's drawings and studied them without, as far as we know, ever actually imitating one of them. The first steps of both, unfortunately, are left in the dark and their early style, therefore, remains more or less conjectural. Giovanni's later development, however, throws some light on his beginnings. The

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painter of the Mount of Olives in the National Gallery in London and the Transfiguration in the Museo Correr in Venice must have started from a much closer union with Mantegna; the influence of his brother-in-law must have been the fundamental experience of his early years. As for Gentile neither his earliest known works nor his later evolution allows one to presume such an enthusiastic devotion to Mantegna. Moreover the whole situation makes him the chief heir and direct successor of his father. He was the eldest and, perhaps, the only legitimate son. He alone inherited the drawings, which only after his death went to Giovanni. This means that Gentile became the official head of Jacopo's workshop. And it has been supposed that he had, according to Venetian habit, collaborated with the latter by whose production his own was absorbed. (Just as a few generations later Orazio Vecelli and Domenico Tintoretto disappear in their more famous fathers' workshops.) It is legitimate to make Gentile's early style directly continue Jacopo's.

The organ shutters of San Marco in Venice, considered to be his earliest existing works and by tradition dated in 1464, do not contradict such a theory. Unfortunately, by their unusual size and coarse execution consistent therewith, they can hardly be compared to the small and elaborate St. Jerome. Discounting these differences we may, nevertheless, state an affinity of the general attitude

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DETAIL OF ST. JEROME AND DRAWING FROM SKETCHBOOK OF JACOPO BELLINI

in the two panels which represent St. Jerome and St. Francis,¹³ the latter showing the same treatment of hills and trees in the middle and backgrounds.

Rather similar in style are the figures of St. Jerome and John the Baptist in elaborate landscapes which are found in the Cathedral of Trau. Berenson's attribution to Gentile Bellini was accepted by Van Marle who dates them about 1467, but is rejected by Fiocco who, in his monograph on Carpaccio, claims them for his hero and dates them later. Just this disagreement between acknowledged authorities makes these rather coarse and secondary paintings important for our problem, for the St. Jerome now in Toledo, when on the market in New York a year ago, was also attributed to Carpaccio by various experts.

Their attribution—completely erroneous in my opinion—rested on a construction of Carpaccio's early development undertaken by Professor Fiocco in order to prove that Carpaccio was not a pupil of the unimportant Bastiani as had been supposed before, but of the far superior Gentile Bellini. To support his theory Fiocco had gathered a number of paintings which combine vague reminiscences of Gentile Bellini with a no less vague resemblance to Carpaccio, and made this rather mixed stock Carpaccio's juvenile production—juvenile with regard to the coarseness and primitiveness of most of these works compared to Carpaccio's authentic production.

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These archaic traits, however, may much more easily be explained if most of the works in question were executed by provincial followers of Carpaccio. But even if there is a line leading to the latter from Gentile Bellini, our St. Jerome in Toledo could not be placed on it but far anterior to any of Carpaccio's products—even in Fiocco's theory. Even with its help we could not go beyond 1475 for an artist born about 1455, and the St. Jerome is certainly a whole decade earlier. How immensely different in style and quality it is compared to Carpaccio's presumed juvenile works was demonstrated in our Venetian Exhibition by Carpaccio's Reception of a Legate (Catalogue No. 17) which forms one of the cornerstones of Fiocco's reconstruction. If it was painted by Carpaccio and about 1475, the St. Jerome falls automatically to the former generation and—if the feeling is correct that it has a touch of Carpaccio's later style—it falls to his teacher Gentile who anticipated some of the characteristics in which the pupil was to excel later on.

Gentile's own later development offers no argument against placing the St. Jerome in the fundamental strata of his formation. In the figures in the background of his representative compositions, such as the Miracles of the Holy Cross, where Gentile might have turned back to his old store of drawings, we meet very similar types. And the Adoration of the Child in the Johnson Collection in Philadelphia¹⁴ attributed to Gentile's school is a later and poorer variation of the compositional scheme of the St. Jerome. This precious acquisition of The Toledo Museum of Art is most probably Gentile's earliest known work and forms an invaluable link between the modern movement in Venice in the third quarter of the fifteenth century and its great instigator, Andrea Mantegna.

¹ Goloubew, *Les Dessins de Jacopo Bellini*, Brussels 1908, II, Pl. LXVII.

² *Ibid.*, Pl. XVIII.

³ *Ibid.*, Pl. IX.

⁴ Tietze, *Masterpieces of European Painting in America*, New York, 1939, Pl. 63.

⁵ Goloubew II, Pls. XXI, XXIII, XXX, XLV.

⁶ *Ibid.*, I, Pls. XXV; II, Pl. V, XXXII.

⁷ *Ibid.*, I, Pls. LVIII, LXVII.

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, Pls. XX, XXXII, LXXIX; II, Pls. IV, XVI.

⁹ *Ibid.*, I, Pls. XVI, XLI; II, Pls. LXVI.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, II, Pls. LXXVI, LXXVII and others.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, I, Pl. LXIV.

¹² Van Marle, *The Development of the Italian Schools of Painting*, The Hague, 1935, XVII, Fig. 71.

¹³ Venturi, *Storia dell' Arte Italiana*, Milan, VII, 4, Fig. 120 and 121.

¹⁴ Van Marle, XVII, Fig. 104.

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR FOR 1940

THE temporary exhibition program is the most important and far-reaching of the Museum's activities. It was the first and only effort of our infant institution at its founding in 1901. Two years later a broad educational program was initiated, but the temporary exhibitions remained the only artistic material of consequence shown in our galleries until the opening of the first unit of our present building in 1912.

During all of our history, whether our own possessions were insignificant or far surpassing in importance anything which we could hope to borrow, we have maintained a lively program of temporary exhibitions. Notable among our showings have been our annual presentation of contemporary American painting, three exhibitions of tapestries held in consecutive years, a showing of pre-Columbian art for the first time that these relics of the native culture of our hemisphere were given recognition by any museum of art, the exhibition of antiquities from our own excavations in Mesopotamia, that of Spanish American furnishings, our annual Oriental art exhibitions of the past ten years, the showing of eighteenth century French furniture, the showings of contemporary decorative art in the past three years, the exhibition of nineteenth century French paintings, of Flemish and French Primitives, of Cézanne and Gauguin, of Contemporary Movements in European Painting, of Artists Unappreciated in Their Own Day, and a vast number of circuited exhibitions, of which the most imposing were the foreign sections of the Carnegie International.

Yet with this notable record, we can claim that 1940 has been the most important year in this respect which we have ever known. We have had a considerable number of exhibitions which are organized primarily for the benefit of the students in our School of Design. We have continued devoting one of our galleries each month to the showing of the work of a Toledo artist. We have shown in May the assembled and selected works of all Toledo artists. We have had during the summer and fall an exhibition of the work of the students in our School. We have had on view for four months a magnificent display of Chinese and Persian ceramics. We opened the year with a very unusual showing of East Indian sculpture. For many years we have been annual host to an exhibition prepared in cooperation with the Toledo Camera Club. This year that showing was expanded into an international photographic salon with entries from twenty-one states and fourteen foreign countries. We presented an industrial design exhibition

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sponsored by the Toledo Junior League. We have shown lithographs, woodcuts, water colors, drawings, architectural models, designs for housing developments, and original Disney celluloids for motion pictures.

Our greatest efforts and the greatest public interest has centered in two of our presentations, Four Centuries of Venetian Painting and the Masterpieces from the Two World's Fairs. The former was organized in conformity with our plan for our annual professorship under Carnegie Corporation subsidy which included the assemblage by the annual professor of an exhibition drawn from the field of his specialization. In it we brought together some ninety-eight paintings and drawings by the masters of the Venetian Renaissance. We published a well-illustrated, scholarly and handsomely printed catalogue. In installation we made an effort at the temporary redecoration of the galleries in which it was shown. To the exhibition we must attribute the greatest part of an increase of some 16,000 in attendance for the month as compared with the same month of the previous year. The great interest was also manifest in the number of people attending lectures upon it. It was necessary to move most of them from the Lecture Hall to the more capacious Auditorium and the maximum number at a single lecture, five hundred and forty-two, was approached on several occasions. From all reports and reactions this was a most successful and inspiring exhibition.

Forty-three pictures from European owners shown at the two World's Fairs were orphaned in this country by the war, presenting an opportunity to show them in Toledo. The cost would have stretched our budget for exhibitions beyond its bounds. We, therefore, for the first time in many years made an admission charge to the exhibition, admitting students brought by their teachers free of charge. Our paid attendance at this exhibition amounted to 8,224 adults and 713 children; 4,485 adults and 9,937 children entered free, either as members, teachers or students. This attendance approached our expectations though not our hopes and the income was of material assistance in defraying the cost. An important by-product of the exhibition was the stimulation of the general attendance at the Museum, particularly on Sundays. Twenty thousand more people visited the Museum in November when it was current than in the same month in 1939.

For 1941 we have in preparation an equally interesting program of exhibitions. We may conserve our finances by reducing the number of subsidiary showings and concentrate our efforts on the principal events. In late March and early April we are plan-

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ning, again in connection with our annual professorship, a concise but comprehensive exhibition of Spanish paintings. It will include substantial representations of the greatest artists and a sufficient showing of less known masters to adequately develop the subject. A feature of the exhibition will be a reconstruction of a small chapel decorated with original twelfth century frescoes.

We are also considering for the fall an exhibition of French paintings of the nineteenth century which like the World's Fair pictures, are now stranded in this country. This, too, will be an exhibition of such cost that we will probably have to make an admission charge to partially finance it.

We have responded to practically all requests for loans from our collection during the past year. The David presented by Mr. Secor has been shown in New York, Cincinnati and Rochester; the Millet, likewise his gift, in Los Angeles; the Carl Hofer, the Alexander Wyant, in Pittsburgh; the Berlinghieri and the Picasso in Boston; the De la Fresnaye in Chicago; the Speicher in Cincinnati; the Bol and the Eeckhout from the Secor Collection, the Van Gogh, Houses at Auvers, from the Libbey Collection, and the Carroll, in Grand Rapids. From the Libbey Collection, the Reynolds, Self Portrait, has been shown in New York; the Hogarth in Washington; the Van Gogh, Wheat Field, and the Manet in Detroit; the Clouet and the Corneille de Lyon in Toronto; the Dürer in Kansas City. We were represented in the Persian exhibition in New York by a leaf from a Kufic manuscript and in the New York World's Fair by the Delacroix, purchased from the DeVilbiss bequest, and by the Champaigne given by Felix Wildenstein.

Although we have exercised restraint in our purchases, our acquisitions for the year have been most notable. From the exhibition of Venetian paintings we secured two outstanding works as the gift of Edward Drummond Libbey. The Giovanni Bellini, Christ Carrying the Cross, is thought to be the original of a number of repetitions of the composition. The sensitivity and spirituality of the face of Christ is so appealing, the technical accomplishment of the painting so magnificent that it was proclaimed by popular vote the most pleasing picture in the exhibition.

Giovanni's elder brother, Gentile Bellini, we believe to have been the author of the St. Jerome in the Wilderness. This delightful panel, filled with the minute detail characteristic of an earlier style, is a source of never-ending interest.

The Adoration of the Magi by Fernando Gallego is a splendid example of early Spanish artistry and adds materially to our small but important representation of the art of that country.

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Early in this century, John Sloan made a vast impress upon the development of art in this country. We acquired his canvas, *Moving Picture Theatre*. Moses Soyer, one of the young forward-looking artists of today, has presented to us *Dancer Resting*, which was shown in our annual American exhibition. We have also purchased five splendid water colors by contemporary Americans from exhibitions shown in the Museum.

The Frederick B. and Kate L. Shoemaker fund has made it possible for us to acquire a number of items for our collection of prints and books, including Van Gogh's only etching, *Portrait of a Man with a Pipe*, Rembrandt's *Christ Carried to the Tomb*, the lithograph of Réjane by Toulouse-Lautrec, the illustrated edition of St. Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, printed in 1489, the illustrated Bible printed by Bevilacqua in Venice in 1498, and a page from a block book, *Apocalypse of St. John*, which we have substituted for a fragmentary page from the same book.

We have also received four prints by Donald F. Witherstine as his gift; a Timothy Cole woodcut, *Portrait of John D. Rockefeller*, as the gift of John D. Rockefeller, Jr.; twenty-five lithographs and twenty-five etchings by Childe Hassam as the gift of Mrs. Hassam; eighteen prints as the gift of Dr. Hans Tietze; and, for our book collection, a colored woodcut page from a German press of 1477, the gift of Kennedy and Company. Carl B. Spitzer has presented fourteen Japanese prints; Hubert D. Bennett has given a contemporary Japanese print; Bernard Simon a Chinese wood-block in color; Mrs. J. Kent Hamilton a Chinese book basket.

Our collection of contemporary glass has been greatly enriched by the gift of the Libbey Glass Company of twenty-seven pieces of the highly artistic ware which they have recently produced. The Owens-Corning Fiberglas Corporation has presented to us a handsome example of a miraculous development of the glass industry, a tablecloth woven of glass fiber.

We have also acquired three exceedingly fine pieces of modern Dutch glass from the Leerdam works and a piece of modern Swedish glass from the Kosta works.

It has been our good fortune to secure the magnificent fifteenth century Venetian enamelled goblet and a fourteenth century enamelled Arabic mosque lamp from the Eumorfopoulos collection, both as the gift of Mr. Libbey, together with three Egyptian glass paste figures of the eighteenth dynasty. Dr. Otto Landman presented a Syrian eye cup of the fourth century.

We have also been given a group of Roman coins by Mr. Charles Bunting and sixteen bookplates by Mr. Carl S. Junge.

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Our School of Design has carried on a very useful program during the year, with an enrollment of 1,034 adults, and 1,560 children, a total of 2,594 in September, 1940, against 1191 adults, and 1,607 children, a total of 2,798 in September 1939. Although these figures show a substantial decrease, particularly among adults, the attendance for 1940 of both adults and children was 64,938 against 65,111, an almost negligible drop. Our courses have been revised each year to eliminate our least productive efforts and to grasp opportunities for greater service to the people of Toledo.

Our art appreciation work has been carried on along the lines which have been customary for a number of years with results which on the surface are most gratifying for we had a total attendance thereat of 85,432 in 1940, against 78,259 in 1939, the increase in number of adults being slightly less than one thousand and the increase in number of children slightly more than six thousand. When we examine our records more closely we find that though we have shown a gain, this is due chiefly to concentrated efforts at the time of our two most important exhibitions. In most months the trend is distinctly downward. This descending curve is particularly apparent among the schools groups brought to the Museum by their teachers. A summary of the number of school groups visiting the Museum shows there were 1,038 in 1938; 901 in 1939; 846 in 1940. The decline in 1939 could be attributed in part to the fact that the public schools were closed for some weeks at the end of the year. Many plausible reasons can be advanced for its continuation in 1940. Our problem however, is not so much to salve our consciences with excuses, as it is to discover the way to reverse this trend. Our city school enumeration has been declining in recent years. This may account for smaller groups but does not explain the reduced number of classes visiting the Museum. To this question we are giving careful attention.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Libbey, in making their bequests for the maintenance of our work in music, expressed in identical language the hope in respect to the price of the concerts for which they provided endowments, "that every such charge shall on all occasions be so reasonable in amount as to encourage attendance on the part of all people irrespective of condition in life." To keep our operating costs at a minimum, the seating capacity of our Peristyle was calculated to fill the need then determinable. It was our thought that when this became inadequate, repetitions of concerts would most flexibly and economically meet growing needs. With a capacity reservation for our regular concerts early in the spring it was possible for us to take for the first time a long con-

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templated step. Arrangements were made to repeat three of our concerts and add a fourth to produce a well rounded course. Conforming to the wishes of our benefactors a price of \$2.50 was set upon the series. The public response has been most thrilling. We look forward to the constant broadening of the opportunities as interest increases and funds become available.

In September we expanded our work in music appreciation through the employment of an additional instructor and the opening of three new classes for children and four for adults. We also offered a very substantial series of educational concerts and presented a number of local organizations in recitals, either in the auditorium or the Peristyle. Our attendance at all music activities including major concerts, recitals, educational concerts, and classes in music appreciation totals 55,683 for the year in comparison with 59,031 for the previous year.

Our motion picture program has also shown a lesser interest than heretofore, the attendance declining from 48,530 to 43,643. This gives us little concern for we have very definitely made an effort to discourage casual and unintelligent patronage of our motion pictures. We have this year made it a requirement that admission is granted only to those who, by presentation of their badges or tickets, can give evidence that they have attended some other Museum activity.

We have carried on a most extensive publicity campaign through press, radio and direct mailings. We sent out thousands of folders on our principal exhibitions. College groups came from Kenyon, Bowling Green, Oberlin, and Detroit, and club groups came from many communities in this district, the most distant from Saginaw.

Our quiet but persistent membership campaign has more than filled the vacancies made by death and resignation and we close the year 1940 with 593 members as against 583 previously. We are pleased to record that Mr. Frank D. Stranahan has transferred from active to sustaining membership.

Our total attendance for the year amounted to 318,809, an increase of 9,719 over the previous year. Adults gained 15,049 to reach 191,277 while children lost 5,330 to reach 127,532.

We might be quite complacent about our year's results. We have brought fifteen thousand more adults into the Museum than last year. Our School, on a slightly decreased enrollment, has shown a more sustained interest than ever before, from which we might argue that we have at last practically eliminated the free samplers. We have had a complete sale of tickets to our Peristyle

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concerts, and sufficient interest to justify the establishment of a subsidiary series, and from this we might suppose that the lessened interest in our music appreciation classes indicates that we have educated our audiences and they are ready to listen to music without being told about it. We could point with pride to the substantial increase in interest on the part of both young and old in our art appreciation work. We could take great credit for the 97,084 adult visits which have been made to the collections and exhibitions, in addition to the 94,193 adult participations in all our concerts, lectures and classes.

We might make a number of other suppositions, all in our own favor. But we have no intention of doing so. It is rather our purpose to examine the past, seek out the trends which it shows, and, if not to our liking, consider how best to counteract them.

By Presidential proclamation, and probably by popular will as well, we are now at least silent partners with the British Empire in the war against the Axis. We do not believe that a war economy can be superimposed upon a peace-time economy without serious dislocation of efforts and interests. We cannot pass from a state of restricted to expanded production without change in the habits and customs which ten years of surplus leisure have fixed. As employment and production increase there will be less time for the free opportunities for self-improvement, more money for the offerings of commercial amusement. With growing income from present occupations and enlarging horizons in other callings there will be less incentive to education for economic improvement. Hours that can be turned into dollars are not apt to go into mental stimulation or aesthetic enjoyment. Fathers and even mothers who have brought their children to the Saturday activities may be taking themselves to the shop or the office. Other interests will make new or extended demands upon men's time.

We know that the war will interfere with our business. We cannot let that discourage us. Three courses of continued usefulness are open to us. The first is to trim our sails to the wind, cutting our operations at every indication of lessening interest. The second is to divert our energies into quasi-patriotic activities with an artistic tinge. The third is to throw increasing energies into the maintenance and improvement of the efforts which have proven successful. No sane man would in these days suggest a fourth, the expansion of offerings, the branching out into new fields.

Were we to trim our sails, we would probably needlessly disrupt our work, retreat at the first few scattering shots without first testing the strength of the opposition.

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In diverting our energies the disturbance of normal Museum work would probably be even greater, turning us from our avowed purposes, and making the return to our usual ways the more difficult when trying times have passed.

In increased efforts in our customary activities seems to lie the greatest safety and the greatest hope for accomplishment. We shall no doubt combine it to some extent with the other two alternatives, for it has always been our policy to discontinue any unproductive activity, and we already have in our School a unit of sixty-six students assisting in Red Cross and British Relief work.

In times of crisis and peril well established institutions such as our own may perhaps best serve their ends by pursuing, at least outwardly, the even tenor of their ways. When our lives are threatened with change, when our habits are disrupted, when our ideals are imperiled, and the foundations of the world which we have known are shaken, it may be helpful to the morale of the community and the country that some of its cherished institutions may seem to be unchanged by the turmoil and confusion about us, that some of our familiar landmarks may stand as an earnest of hope for the future. In times of strain, schools, colleges, churches, libraries, museums, have an even greater duty, an even larger field of opportunity. To them particularly is entrusted the preservation of the culture of the ages, upon them is the responsibility for the preservation of the good of the past. They are charged by sacred trust with turning the mind of man from hatred, violence and greed. Theirs is the obligation to propagate and develop an interest in the nobler things of life.

In the late depression we met our challenge. Amid the foreclosing of mortgages, the closing of industries, the tottering of banks, despite the worries which we may have had internally, the Museum stood out as a symbol of strength and solidity, a place where one might come and forget the troubles of the times, at least for a moment, in the beauties of art and music, where one might find courage to go on, a harbinger of hope for the future.

We are confident that we will measure up equally well in the future. To do so we must first of all inquire into our own shortcomings. We must seek out any slackening of effort, any deterioration of quality which may have occurred. We must determine wherein our offerings, so successful in the past, fail to meet changing conditions. We, too, as an institution, must seek self-improvement. If we face the situation squarely, neither deluding nor excusing ourselves, we are confident that the years ahead may be those of greatest achievement, most truly fulfilling the ideals of our Founder.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS

OUR ROMNEY PORTRAIT

AFTER a century of neglect, George Romney in recent years has come to rank with Gainsborough and Sir Joshua Reynolds as one of the three leaders in English portraiture in the eighteenth century, somewhat below either of them in artistic stature, but likewise, perhaps, a jot above Sir Henry Raeburn, John Hoppner and Sir Thomas Lawrence, if such fine hair-lines of distinction can be drawn.

The fact that he is principally esteemed for his portraits of fashionable women—particularly Lady Hamilton, “the divine Emma”—has tended to obscure the excellence of his male portraits, many of distinguished personages.

The Secor Collection’s dignified and colorful three-quarter length likeness of John MacKenzie, Lord MacLeod, hot-headed heir of the third Earl of Cromartie, is typical of Romney’s simple and straightforward style as he neared the end of his career.

And what a career it had been! Born the son of a Lancashire cabinet maker in the town of Beckside, he was removed from school at the age of eleven as a dull-witted lad more fit to learn his father’s trade than his lessons. And so it proved. The boy became an adept wood-carver whose hand-made violins delighted the neighborhood. In his spare time he liked to sketch the workmen at their tasks or to copy the plates in London magazines. By the time he reached maturity, friends in the neighboring town of Kendal prevailed upon the father to have him apprenticed to an itinerant painter named Christopher Steele, who had studied in Paris and was the current rage of the district. Steele turned out to be a scoundrel and a rake, but before young Romney had done with him and had bought back his own freedom, he learned the secret of grinding and mixing colors, along with all the dull preparation that formed the underside of painting.

Throughout his life these lessons served Romney well, and today his canvases are as brilliant as the day they were painted. But the superficial and inadequate technical tricks that he also learned at this time, proved to be an embarrassment even at the peak of his powers.

Except as an indication of his volatile and unpredictable character, we are not concerned here with Romney’s desertion of a devoted wife and son when he set out to conquer artistic London at the age of twenty-eight, nor need we consider the motives that prompted his equally extraordinary return to them when it was all over, forty year later.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS



LORD MAC LEOD

GIFT OF ARTHUR J. SECOR

GEORGE ROMNEY

Characteristically, he made his debut in the capital by falling out with the man who could have helped him most, Sir Joshua Reynolds, first president of the Royal Academy. This breach kept Romney from membership in the Academy and threw a thousand social barriers in his path, as if his uncouth speech and manners, his dour and procrastinating nature were not enough.

In the light of such personal handicaps, his ultimate rivalry with the suave Sir Joshua as the most sought-after portraitist in

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS

London, is the greatest possible tribute to the provincial intruder's ability. Two years spent in Rome studying and sketching Michelangelo, Raphael, and Correggio worked wonders. Enthusiasts detected a new depth and feeling in everything he did. And Romney now fancied himself as an historical painter, though he seems to have had neither the tenacity nor the ability to bring his monumental brain children into being.

An expensive house in Cavendish Square and the fortuitous patronage of the Duke of Richmond soon provided the necessary cachet to attract a steadily mounting list of fashionable patrons. But during his best period all other sitters took second place to "the divine Emma" who inspired no less than fifty canvases in a dozen years. Still he persevered with his commissions, often receiving as many as six sitters in a day, and toiling at his easel from eight in the morning until midnight. Then as his health began to fail, he wrote to a friend, "This cursed portrait painting; how I am shackled with it!"

The portrait of Lord MacLeod was executed during this hectic phase, in 1788, one of a numerous series including such minor notables as the Fourth Earl of De La Warr and Sir William Lemon of Carclew. In all of these, costume, posture, and features bear a striking similarity, although the Toledo Museum picture lacks the usual landscape background of the artist's best post-Italian manner and the characteristic modeling is reduced to a minimum on the brilliant red coat. The fluent brush work, the luminous rendering of flesh tints against a warm grey background, the texture of ruff and cuffs, the gold epaulets, the intricate silver star and sword, reveal the master's touch. Something of determination mixed with kindness is caught in the features but, be it noted, hardly a hint of the wily soldier's tempestuous career.

MacLeod apparently sat to Romney the year after receiving his commission as a Major-General in India, and the year before he died. As a young man, forty-three years earlier, he had joined the uprising of Prince Charles, had been imprisoned for treason, only to be pardoned, after two years, to join the Swedish military service and to witness the Battle of Prague from the German lines.

Our painting proves once again that George Romney could be depended upon to produce a sincere and graceful portrait stamped with an air of truth, be his subject a country squire, an eminent divine, or a man of action. Subtler traits of character he seldom attempted, while his panegyrics were reserved for the young blades and the ladies.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS

SPANISH PAINTING EXHIBITION

CLIMAXING a season of unusual attractions at the Museum, the third consecutive exhibition to be arranged by the Annual Professor since 1939 will be what is undoubtedly the most complete survey of Spanish painting ever attempted outside of Spain. To show the chronological development, there has been assembled a remarkable group of frescoes and sixty superb canvases by all of the famous painters and the more significant among little-known and anonymous masters. The Exhibition opened on March 16 and will continue to April 27.

Adjacent to the Cloister, the most striking single feature of the exhibition is a full-scale reconstruction of the vaulted Mozarabic chapel of San Baudilio de Berlanga near Soria, Castile, in which have been installed the original twelfth century Biblical frescoes, the finest remaining from the Spanish Romanesque period. Chronologically arranged, twenty-five primitives by the fourteenth century masters of the Franco-Gothic and Italo-Gothic styles, and the fifteenth century masters of the International style thoroughly illustrate an intense and colorful epoch.

With the sixteenth century, the first of the titans appeared in the person of El Greco who, with his contemporaries, paved the way for the seventeenth century, the Golden Age, when Ribera was painting in Naples, Murillo, Zurbaran and Herrera in Seville, and Velasquez in Madrid. At the end of the eighteenth century Goya brought to a dramatic climax the glorious art of the Iberian peninsula. Fittingly, El Greco, Velasquez, and Goya are each honored with a separate gallery.

Among the early works, Toledoans can take particular pride in the large Epiphany executed by Fernando Gallego about 1490, which has recently been acquired for the Edward Drummond Libbey Collection. As the first important Castilian to paint in the Hispano-Flemish manner, Gallego powerfully influenced the art of northern and western Spain.

The Exhibition is financed in large part from a grant of the Carnegie Corporation of New York and is made possible by the cooperation of many American collectors, dealers and museums, who have generously lent their possessions to us.

To take the place of the conventional catalogue, there has been published a brief history of Spanish Painting prepared by the Annual Professor. It includes over one hundred illustrations and serves not only as a guide to this showing but as a concise reference work for those interested in the subject.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART NEWS

MUSEUM NEWS

We are indebted to Dr. Hans Tietze, Annual Professor last year, for the article in this issue of the News on the St. Jerome in the Wilderness by Gentile Bellini. The discussion of the painting was first published in *Art in America* for July 1940. It is here reprinted, slightly revised, and with a number of additional illustrations, with their consent.

A group of nineteen, including members of the Museum staff and students in Professor José Gudiol's course on Spanish painting, traveled to Chicago on February 23 to see the important Goya Exhibition at the Art Institute. Previously executives of the Museum and other staff members had visited the Exhibition. Professor Gudiol was one of the lecturers invited to take part in the Goya Seminar at the Art Institute on January 31 and February 1.

Our Velasquez, *The Man with the Wine Glass*, was lent to the Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts for its Tenth Anniversary Exhibition held in January. Other paintings from the Museum's collection recently lent were: Carl Hofer, *Flower Girl*, to the George Walter Vincent Smith Art Gallery, Springfield, Mass.; Manet, *Portrait of Antonin Proust*, to the Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Mass., for its Exhibition of French Paintings from 1870 to 1940; and *The Blue Necklace* by Eugene Speicher, to the Rehn Galleries, New York, for its comprehensive exhibition of that artist's work.

The Museum has received as the gift of Mrs. Meyer Rosenfield of Des Moines, Iowa, a Syrian glass bowl of about 200 A.D. The piece is of translucent greenish glass with silvery iridescence, in fine condition, and a worthy addition to our collection.

In a recent issue of the Museum News we asked for an expression of opinion on the new uniform framing of our contemporary American paintings. The judgment of the many who responded to this request was overwhelmingly favorable. We have therefore begun to reframe similarly the contemporary European paintings. A number of our Members, while approving of these frames on present day paintings, have questioned their appropriateness to those of past centuries. We assure all with like reservations that it has never been our intention to apply the same type of frame to the old masters or even to the nineteenth century works. We have made some progress toward another type of framing for these pictures, such as those which we have placed upon the Constable, the Turner, the Velasquez and the Dürer.

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MUSEUM HOURS

The Museum is open daily from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. and on Sundays and Holidays from 1 to 5 P.M. The Museum is closed on New Years and Christmas.

Admission to the Museum and its regular educational activities is free at all times. There is no charge for tuition in its School of Design.

MEMBERSHIP

Anyone interested may become an Annual Member of the Museum by paying Ten Dollars a year, thereby securing all privileges of the Museum and contributing to the support of much of the free educational work for all of the children of Toledo.

THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART

FOUNDED BY EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

I DESIRE to become a member of The Toledo Museum of Art, paying ten dollars (\$10) a year for full privileges for myself and members of my immediate family.

I hereby constitute Blake-More Godwin, Director of the Museum, my attorney in fact in my name and stead, to subscribe my name to the Articles of Incorporation.

Name.....

Address.....

Date.....

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